

SPORTS

Sentinel Dares To Ask

Are Blacks Really Better Athletes?

By Lonnie Wright
Sentinel Sports Editor

That question has been thought about unconsciously, but for the most part, consciously by observers, spectators and participants.

If you observe the plight of the black athlete, you will notice one factor that condones his superiority. GROWTH Since the break through of Jackie Robinson, the first black in baseball, there has been a steady increase in the number of black athletes. The NBA now represents the epitome of black success in sports.

The question again: Are blacks really better athletes? Even considering the NBA as an example, you must answer the question with facts and nothing but facts, to reach a correct conclusion.

First, let's make some

fundamental comparison. Background: The roots of black athletes do not vary much. The majority come from lower income American families. This is in contrast with the white athletes whose families for the most part are middle Americans. The distance socially between American social — cultural satuses is great enough to notice considerable differences — differences psychologically, socially, financially and spiritually.

Time has an overall effect on the factors just mentioned. We must admit a more positive social, psychological, financial and spiritual difference between, say, a Jackie Robinson today and the Jackie Robinson who broke through the racist institution of yesterday. The increasing change of black athletes' attitudes has made it



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easier to perform. Baseball, basketball and football, I would say, are America's major sports. Determination of the major sports comes from the accountant's bottom line — NET IN REVENUE. Major sports, whether spectators know it or not, were designed primarily as entertainment. The largest market of people to be entertained is the white market.

Going back to the break through of Jackie Robinson in baseball...In, say, the 30's, 40's and 50's, blacks' average income in America was much lower than whites.

For one to be entertained one had to have an expendable income. Blacks had a hard enough time making ends meet to say nothing of spending extra money on sports. In other words, white management in early sports catered to the largest market of people with expendable income — white people.

That I consider, is unfortunately good business — the bottom line.

Now, as you know, the sports business has gone through some changes. There is a larger market of blacks with extra

money to see sports events, so the sports business sees the green dollar and not black and white people.

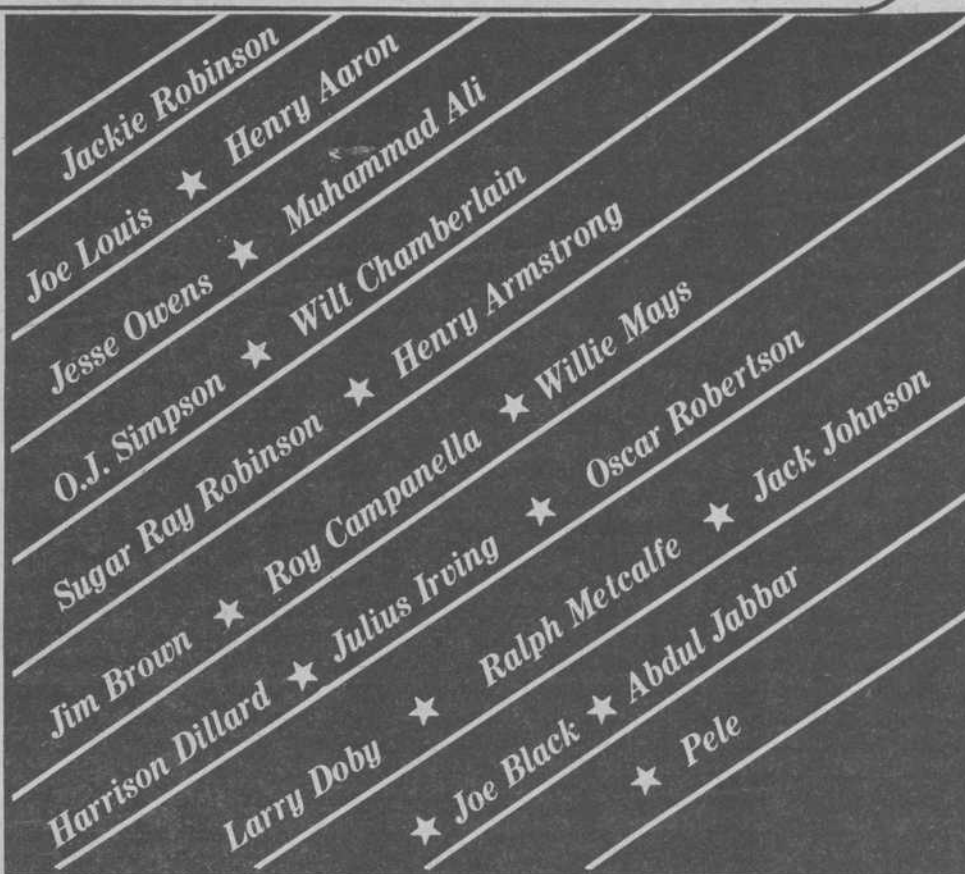
However, the white spectator is still in the majority. It sounds as though I'm contradicting myself. Not really. The majority of spectators in NBA are white. So, why is there a majority of black players on the teams? Would ability be a suitable answer?

The growth of a larger black spectating audience is another answer. Oh, and I almost forgot, the team that wins the most games and, eventually, the most championships, their bottom line is much sweeter.

To answer the original question, 'Are blacks really better athletes?' I would say, count the growth of black athletes in the major sports.

But don't be surprised to see a cultivation of white heroes in the near future, as a result of our unfortunate identifying race superiority factors. For example, how do you feel when TV showed all white heroes and no blacks and you, as a kid, were running around with a cape and a white image you could never become? The same applies to sports. Now you see white kids saying, "Doctor 'J' from the corner," or "Sky hook by Kareem." I've seen white kids do the Ali shuffle. Now they are trying to break Hank Aaron's record. Every sport seems to have a black hero.

I predict: A rise in spectators for tennis and soccer, now that Arthur Ashe and Pele have retired! So, the point is...Let's tell the truth, America, even if it hurts YOU!



Delgado Loses Crucial Bout

Las Vegas Steve Delgado, (154) North American Boxing Federation junior middleweight champion, faced a crucial test in his youth career Tuesday night at the Aladdin Hotel meeting a tough campaigner from Sacramento Babs McCarthy.

Delgado, 14-4-1 and world rated No. 8 by the

World Boxing Council, lost via the three-knockdown rule at 2:35 of the 6th round. Referee Harry Krause stopped the fight after McCarthy floored the game Degaldo with a flurry of combinations to the head along the ropes.

McCarthy, (152) ranked No. 9 by the NABF, has fought a number of world-

world-ranked fighters including Pete Tanzany, Randy Shields, Larry Bonds and Rocky Mosley, Jr.

Both Ranzany and Shields have fought champion Jose "Pipino" Cuevas for the World Boxing Association (WBA) welterweight championship.

In other bouts on the triple-header card

promoter by Tony Trudnich's Las Vegas Sports Promotions, Bruce Curry, former NABF junior welterweight champ from Los Angeles out of the Jesse Reid stable, decided No. 8 NABF Ron Cummings, Sacramento. Curry is the current NABF welterweight champion.

Chuie Rodriguez, who

replaced Jorge "Kid Dynamite" Morales, No. 9-ranked lightweight by the WBC, stopped Mike Lopez, Tuscon. Ring physician Dr. Donald Romero examined Lopez at the end of the 7th round and instructed referee Ferd Hernandez to stop the fight due to extensive cuts of Lopez' face.



DELGADO